

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 SSO-00 /025 W  
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O 111604Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2627

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DAMASCUS 0491

FOR S/S

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A)

SUBJECT: STATEMENTS AND TOAST FOR CONTINGENCY USE IN DAMASCUS

REF: STATE 26602

1. ARRIVAL STATEMENT: I BELIEVE THIS IS THE TWENTIETH TRIP WE'VE MADE TO DAMASCUS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF OUR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A JUST AND LASTING PEACE IN THE AREA. WE ARE HERE TO EXPLORE THE VIEWS OF THE LEADERS OF THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT ON A POSSIBLE NEXT STEP IN THESE EFFORTS, AND I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO MY DISCUSSIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM AND PRESIDENT ASAD.

2. TOAST: MR. FOREIGN MINISTER, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS. SOMEONE ONCE SAID "THE DISTANCE DOESN'T MATTER; IT IS ONLY THE FIRST STEP THAT IS DIFFICULT." WELL, AFTER TWENTY VISITS TO THE AREA I CAN DISPUTE THAT STATEMENT. NOT ONLY WAS THE FIRST STEP DIFFICULT, BUT EACH SUCCEEDING STEP HAS PROVED DIFFICULT, AS WELL. STILL IF PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE, AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT FURTHER PROGRESS WILL COME. WE ARE MOVING TOWARD A CLEARER MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE  
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VIEWS OF EACH OF THE PARTIES TO THE DISPUTE IN THE

MIDDLE EAST, AND I BELIEVE THIS UNDERSTANDING IS A NECESSARY PRELIMINARY TO THE RESUMPTION OF DISCUSSIONS IN GENEVA. HAVE BEEN GRATIFIED TO OBSERVE THE CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IN SYRIAN/AMERICAN RELATIONS. I WILL SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK ONCE AGAIN MY VERY GRACIOUS SYRIAN HOSTS FOR THE MANY ACTS OF KINDNESS AND HOSPITALITY SHOWN ME DURING OUR ASSOCIATION.

3. DEPARTURE STATEMENT: THIS VISIT WAS TO LEARN THE VIEWS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC ON THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER MOVEMENT TOWARD SETTLEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST QUESTION. OUR EXCHANGES, AS ALWAYS, HAVE BEEN FRANK AND FRIENDLY. I COME AWAY WITH A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE POSSIBILITIES FOR THE FUTURE, AND WILL COMMUNICATE THIS UNDERSTANDING TO THE OTHER LEADERS WITH WHOM I WILL MEET IN THE COMING DAYS. FOR THOSE WHO WOULD SEE A CONTRADICTION BETWEEN OUR EFFORTS FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION AND THOSE WHICH WOULD TAKE PLACE IN GENEVA, I WOULD SIMPLY SAY THEY ARE COMPLEMENTARY TO EACH OTHER. OUR CONCERN IS WITH RESULTS ACHIEVED WITHOUT REGARD TO THE ARENA IN WHICH THEY ARE ACHIEVED AND WITH FINDING THE MOST PROMISING PATH TOWARD A JUST AND LASTING SETTLEMENT BETWEEN ALL THE PARTIES. OUR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS ON ALL FRONTS TOWARD THIS COMMON GOAL WILL CONTINUE AND I AM GRATEFUL TO PRESIDENT ASAD AND MY GOOD FRIEND THE FOREIGN MINISTER FOR THE WARMTH WITH WHICH THEY HAVE RECEIVED ME AND FOR THEIR FRANKNESS AND OPENNESS IN SHARING THEIR VIEWS WITH ME. I AM OPTIMISTIC THAT FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARD A JUST AND LASTING PEACE IS POSSIBLE. MZDPHY

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